

The Broad Ax.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY.
Will promulgate and at all times uphold the true principles of Democracy, but farmers, Catholics, Protestants, Knights of Labor, Irish, Mexicans, Republicans, Priests, or any one else can have their say, so long as their language is proper and responsibility is fixed. The Broad Ax is a newspaper whose platform is broad enough for all, ever claiming the editorial right to speak its own mind. Social communications will have attention; with only on one side of the paper.

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Few people appreciate how much of a nuisance they are to those who wish them well.

Queen Victoria's breaking of records in the matter of reigning is also breaking her son's creditors.

A Chicago man is said to have died of joy, but the health authorities are not fearing an epidemic on that account.

The Englewood, Ill., policeman who killed a mad dog with a shovel is probably a graduate from the Holmes cascade school for sleuths.

Three Cubans are to be garroted by order of Gen. Weyler, and the commander's private secretary is doubtless preparing a glowing description of this great Spanish victory, in which the enemy will be totally exterminated with small loss to the Spanish troops.

There is a man in Memphis with enough charges against him to put him in jail for 1,425 years. He is evidently one of those individuals with a mania for telling every one he meets why the country is going to the dogs if it doesn't fall in line with his views.

The Chicago police have raided a certain gambling house in which they found a wheel so cleverly controlled by a compressed air device that there was not the slightest chance of a player's winning, as the man in control of the wheel could stop it on any number he desired. Doubtless there are plenty more such "sure thing" wheels in guileless Chicago.

Among the common offenders in the cell at Jefferson market police court is New York, Albert Weber, the former millionaire piano-forte manufacturer spent several hours waiting for some one to come and pay a \$5 fine. He was fined for assaulting a workman in his factory, and by some accident none of his friends were at hand when his case came up and he himself had not the required sum in his pocket.

Stephen Crane, the novelist, appears as a witness in a New York police court, to testify to the orderly conduct of Dora Clark, who was arrested as a street walker. His evidence secured her discharge, but she protested that the police were persecuting her. Crane's friends state that in risking his own reputation by thus appearing he was performing what he considers to be a "knightly" act of justice to an oppressed woman.

There is a terrific scandal in New York at present over the manner in which certain hospitals are run. It is openly claimed that certain well known hospitals frequently refuse to receive badly injured patients—that is, such whose cases appear desperate—because they wish to keep their death-rate as low as possible. An investigation will probably take place, and it is believed that serious mismanagement, if not worse, will be developed.

Fay Templeton is again before the public—as least she personally has disappeared, but her affairs are again before the public. She was playing in Rice's new burlesque, Excelsior, Jr., in Montreal, Can., and it is supposed that she has gone to Europe, her companion being a man named Brown who is said to be a nephew of John Wamaker's. Rice is making every endeavor to discover her whereabouts, as is also her aunt, Mrs. Adams of New York, but not the slightest clue has been found.

When Gen. Scott was asked his authority for spelling wagon with two g's, he said that the spelling was on the authority of Winfield Scott, commander of the armies of the United States of America. When the officials of the bureau of engraving and printing criticized for spelling tranquility with one l, on the face of the recently issued one-dollar silver certificates, they reply that in quoting from the constitution they followed the spelling of the original document; and in view of this authority it is not worth while to honor for future premiums one dollar silver certificates of the issue of 1896.

The arrest in New York of counterfeiters Knapp and Scott has led to a very interesting and important discovery on the part of the United States secret service officials. It appears that this gang had in their employ a large number of their spurious half and quarter dollars. It is believed that this discovery will lead to the unearthing of a very elaborate system in which a number of street car men have been mixed up for years. It is a very clever scheme, for few persons would ever think of examining a coin for its change on a car, as to its genuineness.

A PUMICE-STONE BARRIER.

One of the Results of the Krakatoa Eruption.

A floating barrier of pumice stone 15 miles long, over 1,000 yards wide and 15 feet deep, closing a seaport to all vessels as effectively as a boom could do, is not the sort of thing one is likely to forget and yet that was one of the results of the Krakatoa eruption, the port being Telok Retoung, in Sunda straits, says Lakure Hours. Formed in a few hours, it would almost seem to be the supreme effort of nature in the pumice-making line were it not that such immense quantities are found at the bottom of the sea—a queer place for pumice stone. But pumice, when produced, is really heavy. It is only the air cavities in it that make it light and as it floats it becomes water logged and down it goes. Most of the pumice we use in Europe comes from the Lipari Islands, north of Sicily, "the home of Vulcan," whence Vulcan is the name of one of them and our "volcano" is descriptive of the natural feature of which it is the type. Here are the pumice quarries—at Monte Chirica and its craters Monte Pelata and Forgia Vecchia—where over 1,000 men are at work in the narrow tunnels and galleries, lighted by clay lamps of antique form. The whole hillside is perforated with groups of these tunnels, which number between 200 and 300 and are so narrow that the men can hardly pass each other in them. And just as coal is found in beds alternated with sandstone and shale, so the pumice is in layers between harder lavas and ashes.

CAT IN THE PULPIT.

Later Caught It by the Neck and the Usher Took It Away.

Inquisitive black cat strayed into the Bristol Methodist Episcopal church on a recent Sunday evening just before the services began, says the Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.

There were very few people in the church at the time, but the loud and plaintive mewling of the stranger attracted their attention and they watched its movements with interest.

The animal climbed up into the choir loft, perched upon the railing and looked down upon the congregation. After a time several members of the choir arrived and the cat scampered away, finally climbing down one of the wooden pillars which supported the choir loft and walked down into the aisle.

Several of the congregation endeavored to coax the cat into their pews, but the proud pussy ignored them and with stately dignity climbed up into the pulpit and sat on the bible. When the pastor came in a moment later he found the cat in possession of the pulpit, but the animal took kindly to the preacher and began to purr and arch his back at the latter's approach.

The pastor took the cat by the back of the neck and handed it down to an usher, who carried puss out of the church. "This is a good omen, brethren," said the pastor and then he went on and preached his sermon.

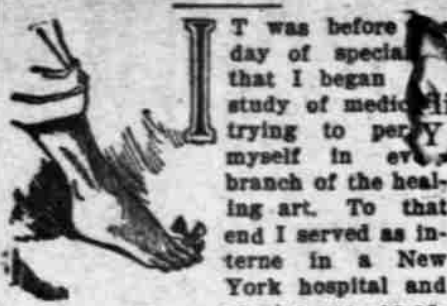
Monkeys at Work in the Transvaal.

Captain E. Moss, who recently returned to London from the Transvaal, tells this story of the monkeys who work for him in the mines: "I have twenty-four monkeys," said he, "employed about my mines. They do the work of seven able-bodied men, and it is no reflection upon the human laborers to say that they do a class of work a man cannot do as well as they. In many instances they lend valuable aid where a man is useless. They gather up the small pieces of quartz that would be passed unnoticed by the workman, and pile them up in little heaps that can easily be gathered up in a shovel and be thrown in the mill. They are exceedingly adept at catching the little particles, and their sharp eyes never escape the very things that the human eye would pass over. When I went digging gold I had two monkeys that were exceedingly interesting pets. They were constantly following me about the mines, and one day I noticed that they were busily engaged in gathering up little bits of quartz and putting them in piles. They seemed to enjoy the labor very much, and would go to the mines every morning, and work there during the day. It did not take me long to learn their value as laborers and I decided to procure more. So I immediately procured a number, and now have two dozen working daily in and about the mines. It is exceedingly interesting to watch my two pet monkeys teach the new ones how to work, and still stranger to see how the new comers take to it. They work just as they please, sometimes going down into the mines when they have cleared up all the debris on the outside. They live and work together without quarrelling any more than men do. They are quite methodical in their habits, and go to work and finish up in the same manner as human beings would do under similar circumstances.

Drunkards in Turkey.

This reminds us that the Turks, who are mentioned occasionally in the newspapers, have a singular manner of regulating drunkenness. If a Turk, overtaken with wine, falls down in the street and is arrested by the guard, he is sentenced to the bastinado; this punishment is repeated as far as the third offense, after which he is regarded as incorrigible and called "imperial drunkard," or "privileged drunkard." If he is then arrested, he has only to name himself, mention his lodging, say he is a "privileged drunkard," he is released and sent to sleep upon the hot ashes of the bath. Thus does Poucherville instruct us. But suppose that the privileged drunkard is suffering from a still or a numb and cannot give his name, address or station? What then? Of what avail his honorary title?—Boston Journal.

THE PARCHMENT TOE.



assistant physician in an insane asylum before going abroad for study in Germany.

On my return to New York I soon built up a fine practice which repaid me for all my work of preparation. A physician has, necessarily, all sorts of people among his patients, but it is not often that a man like my friend Alfred Van Bruler goes to one for advice. However, he was ushered into my private office one morning and he came on professional business. Van Bruler had a splendid physique, was handsome as Montague, and like him an actor; adored by the women, praised by the critics and lionized generally.

His strong, healthy appearance gave one the impression that here was a man who possessed a sound mind in a sound body. Judge then of my surprise when, greetings over, he leaned forward in his chair and said in excited tones:

"Dairymple, the great toe on my right foot has turned to parchment!" It was with a herculean effort that I restrained from hilarious mirth at these absurd words. I thought at first that it was a bit of fine acting, but a quick glance at his face checked my laughter and convinced me that no matter how irrational his speech he firmly believed what he stated.

"You astonish me, Alfred," I said, quietly enough, for, although I have known several cases of flesh ossifying I have never before heard of its changing to parchment. "This is something new."

"Yet," he broke in, triumphantly, "if flesh can become bone, why cannot it as easily change to parchment?"

I remained silent, for I knew no answer to make except the childish one that "it never had."

"You see," he continued, eagerly, "it came about this way. Last night I dreamed that I tried to cut the nail of the great toe of my right foot and found that I was simply cutting into



I MADE A CUT.

roll after roll of a parchment-like substance shaped like a toe. I awoke in a terrible fright and felt a strange lightness in that toe. Unable to go asleep again I rose, under the pretense of cutting the nail and found—"he dropped his voice to a whisper—"that the dream was quite true. I tried to cut the nail and discovered, as you will, that I could have clipped off the whole thing without feeling it, as it was really nothing but parchment."

He flung himself back in his chair as if to say: "I have told you all and you must help me."

"I will help you, old fellow," I said, aloud, then for one moment covered my face with my hands and in that brief time mapped out the course to follow. I could see that the horror of his dream had so wrought upon his fancy that it had become a reality which could not be dispelled by laughter or scorn. Going to the door I locked it as if to secure the greatest privacy.

"Remove your shoe and let me make an examination," I commanded.

He did so and I found the toe in perfect condition, except that the nail had been trimmed a little too short. I had no doubt that this was the cause of the dream which had produced such an effect. His brain, for some reason not clear to me, was in such a condition as to render this dream so vivid that he had accepted it as reality. As I knew from my experiences in dealing with patients laboring under hallucinations in the asylum, nothing I could say would convince him that it was only the fancy of an idle brain. It was best, then I decided, not to waste time in vainly trying to show him his error.

I had known of a somewhat similar case at the insane asylum. A patient conceived the idea that his head was turned backward and insisted upon reversing his clothing, buttoning everything in the back, and even walking backward. The physician was finally obliged to humor him by giving his head a severe wrench "to turn it around to its proper position," before he was satisfied to don his apparel in the customary way.

"Van," I said, "yours is an unusual case and unusual means must be used for its cure. Are you brave enough to submit to heroic measures to save your toe, perhaps, indeed, your life even?"—for this mysterious change may affect the whole system if not checked at the beginning.

He shuddered, but answered firmly: "I consent to whatever you think best. If I am crippled my career is ruined. Imagine my limping on the stage to do love parts!" and he laughed bitterly. He knew the sickle public so well that he realized if he disappointed it in any way it would without compunction desert him and put another fool in his

place. The winter season had just closed and his time was at his own disposal.

"Then," I resumed, "I will amputate the toe. But to do this would make you in a sense what you so dread to become, a cripple. I will remove it, but I must replace it."

"How is that possible?" he asked, eagerly.

"I have just received word," I answered, "of a patient who met with an accident a half hour ago which will necessitate the removal of his right leg. The limb itself is in a sound condition, but it was crushed at the knee. Within an hour I will have amputated it and will have a live, healthy great toe in my possession, which I can immediately graft on to your foot. If you consent to the operation it can be performed within an hour and a half, for I will immediately bring the toe to your room, remove yours and sew the healthy one on without the loss of a moment's time. Shall it be done?"

Tears of gratitude coursed down Van Bruler's cheeks as he answered:

"You are my preserver, Dairymple. I am in your hands."

At the expiration of the stated time I joined him in his apartments, carrying a long bundle which might have been a severed human limb or a billet of wood. This I placed carefully on a table and proceeded to put my patient under the influence of chloroform. Then with a sharp instrument I made a cut, slight, but deep enough to leave a scar, around the base of the great toe of the right foot, and, after carefully bandaging it with an antiseptic dressing, restored Van Bruler to consciousness.

When he opened his eyes I exclaimed, enthusiastically:

"You stood it like a hero, Alfred, and your magnificent constitution is sure to pull you through all right."

As the matter was a very delicate one we agreed upon perfect secrecy, so neither of us had any embarrassing questions to answer. I dressed the toe daily, feeling like a dyed-in-the-wool hypocrite, always reporting it as doing well, and at the end of a fortnight I declared the grafting complete.

Under the circumstances Van Bruler's gratitude was very painful to me, and his generous check, tenfold the amount of my bill, was so abhorrent that I sent it anonymously to a fund for building a home for needy actors.

Sumatra's Marvelous Volcano.

There are many mud volcanoes scattered throughout the world, but there are few whose action is so regular and so characteristic as that of Dempo, in the island of Sumatra. This marvelous volcano, about 10,000 feet in height, was visited recently by a correspondent, who thus describes it: All was quiet and placid and I sat down a while to take in the details of a scene so novel; a vast circular basin, half a mile in diameter, with rocky sides of sheer precipices, displaying at places horizontal strata, and at the bottom of this another smaller basin, some 200 feet in diameter, filled to within about thirty or forty feet of its rim, with a smoking substance, like burnished silver, which reflected the blue sky and every passing cloud. We had sat thus for about ten or twelve minutes when I noticed that the center of the white basin had become intensely black, and was scored with dark streaks. This area gradually increased. By steady scrutiny with my glass, for it was difficult to make out what was silently and slowly taking place, I at last discovered that the blackness marked the sides of a chasm that had formed in—what I now perceived the white burnished mirror to be—a lake of seething mud. The blackness increased. The lake was being engulfed. A few minutes later a dull, sulen roar was heard, and I had just time to conjecture within myself whence it proceeded when the whole lake heaved and rose in the air for some hundreds of feet, not as if violently ejected, but with a calm, majestic upheaval, and then fell back upon itself with an awesome roar which reverberated round and round the vast cauldron and echoed from rocky wall to rocky wall like the surge of an angry sea; and the immense volume of steam let loose from its prison house dissipated itself in the air. The wave circles died away on the margin of the lake, which resumed its burnished face and again reflected the blue sky and silence reigned again until another geyser had gathered force for another expiration. Thus, all day long, the lake was swallowed up and vomited forth once in every fifteen or twenty minutes.

Everything Was Grist for Dickens.

Of the making of new books during our walks there was no end. Everything suggested "copy" to Dickens, either as author or editor. He was a persistent pedestrian, having acquired the habit of prowling around London at night when he was suffering from insomnia. One afternoon we inspected the picture gallery of Lord Darnley's residence near "Gad's Hill." A long line of family portraits extended back to the Crusaders. Among the Court ladies, the grim warriors and stern judges, a golden-headed boy stood out as if painted with sunshine. A noise attracted our attention at the other end of the room, and there was a boy the exact duplicate of the picture, the likeness having been reproduced after many generations. "That will make a good story," said Dickens, as we strolled through the park. "Take the boy of the picture and put him through his adventures in olden times. First volume. Then take the modern boy, identical with his ancestor in appearance, mind, tastes and morals, and describe his adventures in our times and show how environment affects the same type of man. I must talk this matter over with Charles Reade; he would do it gloriously."—Ladies' Home Journal.

A CONVENT OF COLORED NUNS.

Founded Long Ago by a Wealthy Colored Lady.

A sight which invariably attracts the attention of strangers in New Orleans is the colored sisters. One so seldom hears of negroes professing the Roman Catholic faith that when he meets a colored nun for the first time he can but gaze after her in open-mouthed wonder. Accustomed as we are, moreover, to associate the black robes of the nun with white, pale faces, the effect is a little startling when a nearer view of a sister of charity discloses the meek brown face of a mulatto. This little band in New Orleans is known as the Holy Family of Sisters. It was founded as far back as 1842 by four free colored women, who, educated and wealthy, resolved to devote their time and money to those of their race so much less fortunate. The oldest of the four became Mother Juliette, who continued at the head of the sisterhood till her death, eight years ago. The convent is what was once the famous Orleans-street ballroom, and many are the tales which are told of the dancing and revelry which for years held sway within its walls. The building is an immense brown structure fronting directly on the narrow French street. The great windows have shutters, always closed, and there was such an air of quietude when I visited the place that I quite started when the bell gave a loud clang, as I pulled it. I felt that I had aroused unwilling echoes—perhaps awakened the ghosts of long ago and was almost tempted to run away when I heard footsteps within coming toward the door. But instead of meeting a frown of disapproval, as I half expected, I was admitted by a dark-faced nun, who appeared to consider it no unusual occurrence that a stranger desired permission to enter. The hall was dim and wide, with a gray stone floor and white pillars at the farther end. While I was inwardly commenting upon its severity and scrupulous neatness, Sister Frances came to show me about. She was rather a small mulatto, with a slender, interesting face, black eyes demurely lowered, and long brown hands meekly folded. Her uniform was of black serge, with a wide white linen guimpe, a white linen bonnet, the customary black veil, and the inevitable black beads and cross. We ascended the wide, easy staircase, and on the first landing I was confronted with the words: "I have chosen rather to be an abject in the house of my God than to dwell in the Tabernacle of Sinners."

A BICYCLISTS' DUEL.

Mounted on Wheels and Armed with Swords Two Frenchmen Fought.

The bicycle has already played many parts, but it has been left to certain Parisian students to use the accommodating machine as a war horse in what their ancestors called a "gentle and joyous passage of arms." The students were returning from a suburban run when a quarrel arose. Fists were proposed to settle it; but one of the party had aesthetic tastes and two old sword bayonets, and he suggested the merits of the latter so persuasively that before long the disputants found themselves facing one another at fifty paces, weapons in rest. The first assault failed entirely, but the second was less fortunate, and in the crash of the charge not only the combatants but their seconds were disheveled. All four were more or less damaged, but worst of all one of the principals, who unintentionally played the Ancient Roman and fell on his own sword. One feels curious to know which of the four feels that L'hor has been satisfied.

Convict Labor in the United States.

Commissioner Carroll D. Wright has issued a statistical report on convict labor in the United States. The total number of convicts in the various penal institutions of the country has risen from 41,887 in 1885 to 54,244 in 1895, and the number engaged in productive labor has increased during the same period from 30,853 to 34,415. The total value of goods produced or worked on in the United States in all the state prisons and penitentiaries was \$19,042,472 in 1895—a decrease. In 1885 the total value of the product of convict labor was \$28,753,999, and the wages paid for convict labor in that year aggregated \$3,512,970; at the present time the total value of convict labor does not exceed \$2,500,000. The decline is made clearer by an enumeration of the states in whose penal institutions it has taken place. These are Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Tennessee and West Virginia. In the remaining states there was an increase.

Feet of Marriage Ceremony.

When two Negritos, a people of the Philippine Islands, are to be wedded, the whole tribe is assembled, and the affianced pair climb two trees growing near to each other. The elders then bend the branches until the heads of the couple meet. When the heads have thus come into contact the marriage is legally accomplished, and great rejoicings take place, a fantastic dance completing the ceremony.

Land and Water.

The total area of land surface of the earth is calculated to be 23.2 per cent, and that of sea 76.7 of the earth's surface, certain assumptions being made for the unknown polar regions. The ratio of land to water is thus 1 to 2.54.

LIGHT FOR TRAVELLERS.

How the English Railroads Have Solved the Problem.

While Americans pride themselves on the rapidity with which they recognize and adopt improvements, England has, until lately taken a certain amount of pride in its early suspicion of novelties. This feeling, however, is now in a great measure giving way to the realization of the necessity of being up with the times, and especially in electrical developments. An evidence of this is seen in the new system of lighting by electricity the cars that run between London and Salisbury, the sailing port of many of the eastern lines of steamers.

The system consisted in providing each car with a small dynamo, placed beneath it and worked directly by a belt passing over the axle. When in motion the car supplies sufficient power to drive the dynamo and at the same time to store electric energy in an accumulator ready to supply light when the train is standing. It would naturally seem that at a higher rate of speed an excess of current would be generated and the opposite result would follow when the train went slowly.

This difficulty was overcome by an ingenious arrangement which secured a practically uniform velocity for the dynamo at whatever rate the car was traveling. Each compartment was fitted with two high candle-power incandescent lamps, the lighting power, steady light for all purposes.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Reform Needs More Than a Day.
To bring them about, and are always more complete and lasting when they proceed with steady regularity to a consummation. Few of the observant among us can have failed to notice that permanently beautiful changes in the human system are not wrought by abrupt and violent means, and that those are the most salutary medicines which are progressive. However, Stomach Bitters is the chief of these. Dyspepsia, a disease of obstinate character, is obliterated by it.

Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna, during all the turmoil and disorder of the Turkish empire, is holding the essential oriental position of "sealer" in the kitchen of the sultan. His duty is to seal all dishes intended for his master's table after they are prepared.

"Great excitement in that big department store." "What was it?" "An elephant fell out of the zoo department through several skylights and ruined the ice in the basement skating rink department."

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